

Message Text

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51

ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 OMB-01 PM-03 NSC-05 SP-02 SS-15 CIAE-00

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R 021145Z JUL 75

FM AMEMBASSY DOHA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 0638

INFO AMEMBASSY ABU DHABI

AMEMBASSY JIDDA

AMEMBASSY KUWAIT

AMEMBASSY MANAMA

AMEMBASSY MUSCAT

AMEMBASSY SANA

AMEMBASSY TEHRAN

C O N F I D E N T I A L DOHA 0798

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR QA YE

SUBJ: VISIT OF YAR PRESIDENT TO QATAR

REF: DOHA 767; SANA 1660

SUMMARY: ATMOSPHERE OF YAR PRESIDENT AL HAMDI'S VISIT TO QATAR WAS WARM. WE HAVE NO RPT NO INFORMATION ON SUBSTANCE OF OFFICIAL CONVERSATIONS, PARTICULARLY AID PROSPECTS, AND JOINT COMMUNIQUE UNENLIGHTENING. IN PRESS INTERVIEW HAMDI DISCUSSED MID EAST, UNION OF YEMENS AND YAR INTERNAL AFFAIRS. END SUMMARY.

1. YAR PRESIDENT IBRAHIM AL HAMDI VISITED QATAR JUNE 29-JULY 1 VISIT, WHICH WAS SCHEDULED TO END AFTERNOON OF JUNE 30, WAS EXTENDED TO MORNING OF JULY 1 WITHOUT EXPLANATION. AL HAMDI RECEIVED FULL RED CARPET TREATMENT. HE MET WITH AND WAS FETED BY AMIR AND FOREIGN MINISTER. VISIT RECEIVED FULL AND FAVORABLE COVERAGE IN LOCAL MEDIA.

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2. JOINT COMMUNIQUE ISSUED JULY 1 CONTAINED USUAL BOILERPLATE

ON BROTHERLY RELATIONS, MID EAST, PALESTINIANS, ETC. COMMUNIQUE MADE SPECIAL MENTION OF YAR'S APPRECIATION FOR QATARI ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE. USUAL INVITATION FOR AMIR TO RETURN VISIT ISSUED AND ACCEPTED, WITH DATE UNSPECIFIED.

3. COMMENT: ALTHOUGH, AS IS USUAL DURING STATE VISITS HERE, WE HAD NO RPT NO OPPORTUNITY TO SPEAK WITH VISITORS, ATMOSPHERE OF VISIT APPEARED WARM. AMIR AND AL HAMDI SEEMED TO HIT IT OFF, AND THEIR CONVERSATION AT OFFICIAL BANQUET WAS UNUSUALLY ANIMATED. EXTENSION OF VISIT MAY BE ANOTHER SIGN THAT THINGS WENT WELL. WE WILL SEE WHAT INFORMATION WE CAN DEVELOP ON SUBSTANTIVE CONVERSATIONS, PARTICULARLY REGARDING POSSIBILITY OF ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE TO YAR FROM GOQ. HOWEVER, QATARIS ARE GENERALLY VERY UNFORTHCOMING, ESPECIALLY AS REGARDS HOW MUCH THEY PROMISED OR GAVE VISITOR, SO WE WOULD APPRECIATE WHATEVER SANA CAN PICK UP ON THIS SUBJECT. AS NOTED IN DOHA REFTL, GOQ OIL REVENUES SHARPLY DOWN, AND THIS WILL INEVITABLY ADD TO ITS USUAL TIGHTFISTEDNESS. END COMMENT.

4. IN AN INTERVIEW PUBLISHED IN QATARI DAILY "AL ARAB" JULY 1, HAMDI MADE SOME COMMENTS ON REGIONAL ISSUES AND YEMENI INTERNAL AFFAIRS WHICH MAY BE OF INTEREST. RE MID EAST, HAMDI IMPLIED THAT CONFRONTATION STATES SHOULD BE LEFT FREE TO DETERMINE THEIR COURSE OF ACTION WITHOUT KIBITZING FROM COUNTRIES NOT RPT NOT DIRECTLY INVOLVED.

5. RE INTERNAL AFFAIRS, ASKED ABOUT HIS "SEIZURE OF POWER", HAMDI EXPLAINED THAT AS A RESULT OF CHAOTIC CONDITIONS IN COUNTRY WHICH DAMAGING YEMEN, CHAIRMAN OF ADVISORY COUNCIL ABDULLAH AL AHMAR, WHO REPRESENTED LEGITIMATE AUTHORITY IN YAR, HANDED OVER AUTHORITY TO PRESENT REGIME--"WE HAVE SEIZED POWER LEGALLY", SAID HAMDI. HAMDI DESCRIBED PRESENT PERIOD AS ONE OF TRANSITION, AND THAT AUTHORITY WILL BE PASSED ON TO WHOMEVER CHOSEN BY ADVISORY COUNCIL. HAMDI CONTINUED THAT A HIGHER ELECTION COMMITTEE WHICH RESPONSIBLE FOR CONDUCTING ELECTIONS FOR ADVISORY COUNCIL ALREADY AT WORK. HE EXPRESSED EXPECTATION THAT NEW ADVISORY COUNCIL WOULD BE FORMED "IN FOUR OR FIVE MONTHS".

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6. ASKED ABOUT PROPOSEE UNION BETWEEN NORTH AND SOUTH YEMEN, HAMDI EXPOUNDED ON UNITY OF YEMENI PEOPLE, BUT SAID DIFFERENT HISTORICAL BACKGROUNDS OF NORTH AND SOUTH HAD CREASED DIFFERENCES. HE EXPRESSED SUPPORT FOR UNION, BUT STRESSED THAT IT WOULD REQUIRE TIME. HE NOTED THAT "CULTURAL AND POLITICAL COMMITTEES" HAD BEEN FORMED IN BOTH COUNTRIES, AND THEY WERE WORKING ON PROBLEM.
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